

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-45 (canceled)

- 1 Claim 46 (previously presented): A method for filtering a
2 plurality of candidate search results to remove
3 near-duplicates, the method comprising:
4 a) for one of the plurality of candidate search
5 results, determining whether the one candidate search
6 result is a near-duplicate of another of the plurality
7 of candidate search results by
8 1) comparing a cluster identifier of the one
9 candidate search result with a cluster identifier
10 of the other candidate search result, and
11 2) if the cluster identifiers of the one and the
12 other candidate search results match, then
13 concluding that the one candidate search is a
14 near-duplicate of the other candidate search
15 result; and
16 b) in response to a determination that the one
17 candidate search result is a near-duplicate of the
18 other candidate search result, rejecting the one
19 candidate search result thereby defining a filtered
20 set of search results including only those of the
21 plurality of candidate search results that have not
22 been rejected.

- 1 Claim 47 (previously presented): A search filter for
2 processing a plurality of search results to remove
3 near-duplicates, the search filter comprising:

4 a) a near-duplicate determination facility for
5 determining, for one of the plurality of candidate
6 search results, whether the one candidate search
7 result is a near-duplicate of another of the
8 plurality of candidate search results, and wherein
9 the near-duplicate determination facility includes a
10 comparison facility for comparing a cluster
11 identifier of the one candidate search result with a
12 cluster identifier of the other candidate search
13 result, and wherein if the cluster identifiers of
14 the one candidate search result and the other
15 candidate search result match, then it is concluded
16 that the one candidate search result and the other
17 candidate search result are near-duplicates; and
18 b) a filter for rejecting the one candidate search
19 result if it is determined that the one candidate
20 search result is a near-duplicate of the other
21 candidate search result and passing the one
22 candidate search result if it is not determined that
23 the one candidate search result is a near-duplicate
24 of the other candidate search result, thereby
25 defining a filtered set of search results including
26 only those of the plurality of candidate results
27 that have not been rejected by the filter.

Claims 48-67 (canceled)